More facilities to passengers

1019. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for not increasing passenger facilities in proportion to increase of users;

(b) whether it is a fact that the upper class railway passenger fare is higher than the concessional air fare of certain private airlines;

(c) if so, whether it is fair and desirable to have such a situation;

(d) whether the thefts, pilferages and crimes in railway service are on the increase; and

(e) if so, the effective measures taken to deal with this trend?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Provision and upgradation of amenities/facilities is a continuous process. While providing amenities, the Railways take into account the number of passengers dealt with at a station. More over, a separate allocation is made every year in the Railway Budget under the Plan Head "Passenger Amenities" to provide better amenities to rail users and an allocation to the tune of Rs. 1102.5 crore has been made during 2009-10 as against Rs. 852.50 crore during 2008-09.

(b) and (c) Due to a variety of reasons, Railway fares cannot be directly compared with air fares.

(d) and (e) As regards theft and pilferage of Railway Property, there has been a decrease in number of cases reported during 2008-09 in comparison to 2007-08. During 2008-09, RPF has arrested 8,961 criminals with recovery of stolen Railway Property worth Rs. 4.68 crores.

In order to control crime against the Railway Property including booked consignments, the following preventive measures are being taken:—

1. Escorting of trains carrying valuable and important consignments as far as possible.
2. Patrolling in yards and other vulnerable areas/sections.
3. Conducting raids on the dens of criminals and receivers of stolen Railway Property in order to bring them to book.
4. RPF armed pickets are posted/deployed in vulnerable sections as far as possible,
5. Plain clothed RPF personnel are deployed to collect crime intelligence with a view to tracking down criminals.
6. Dog squads are deployed for patrolling in yards and vulnerable areas.
7. Close co-ordination between the RPF, the GRP and the Local Police is maintained at various levels to deal with criminal and receivers of stolen Railway Property.